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**DECISION RECORD AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
ZIEGLER CHEMICAL & MINERAL CORPORATION'S  
TOM TAYLOR GILSONITE MINE SHAFT NO. 3  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
EA NO. 1997-21**

Ziegler Chemical & Mineral Corporation (Ziegler) proposes to re-enter Shaft No. 3 of the Tom Taylor Mine south of Bonanza, Utah, Uintah County. The purpose is to mine the remaining block of ore located in the Little Emma Gilsonite Vein. Previous mining in Shaft No. 3 was completed in 1968. The mine is located on Lease U-0122694. No new surface disturbance is anticipated.

**Decision**

It is my decision to approve the Proposed Action Alternative. Mitigation measures identified for the selected Proposed Action have been formulated into the Conditions of Approval (COAs). Applicant-committed environmental protection measures, as contained in the Proposed Action and reiterated in the COAs are additional proponent obligations.

The action and conditions analyzed and formulated are in conformance with the Book Cliffs Resource Area Resource Management Plan (BCRMP) (BLM, 1985).

**Finding of No Significant Impact**

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in EA No. 1997-21, I have determined that impacts are not expected to be significant and an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

**Rationale for Decision**

The decision to allow the Proposed Action will not result in any undue or unnecessary environmental degradation. Impacts to golden eagle nests sites will be mitigated through using an alternative access road from February 1 through July 15, if eagles are nesting.

**Affected Party**

This decision may be appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, Office of the Secretary, in accordance with the regulations contained in 43 CFR §3598.5 and Form 1842-1, Information on Taking Appeals to the Board of Land Appeals. If an appeal is taken, your notice of appeal must be filed in the Vernal District Office within 30 days from receipt of this decision. The appellant has the burden of showing the decision appealed from is in error.

If you wish to file a request for a stay or suspension of the effectiveness of this decision pursuant

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to the regulations of 43 CFR §3594.5 and 43 CFR §4.21(a) during the time that your appeal is being reviewed by the Board, the petition for stay should accompany your notice of appeal. A petition for a stay shall include sufficient justification based on the standards outlined in 43 CFR §4.21(b). Copies of the notice of appeal and petition for a stay must also be submitted to each party named in this decision, to the Interior Board of Land Appeals, and the Office of the Solicitor at the same time the original documents are filed with this office. If you request a stay, you have the burden of proof to demonstrate that a stay should be granted.

**Standards for Obtaining a Stay**

Except as otherwise provided by law or other pertinent regulation, a petition for a stay of a decision pending appeal shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards:

- (1) The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied,
- (2) The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits,
- (3) The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and
- (4) Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

*David E. Howell*

David E. Howell  
Vernal District Manager

5/22/97

Date

**Attachments:**

1. EA No. 1997-21, Ziegler Chemical & Mineral Corporation's  
Tom Taylor Gilsonite Mine Shaft No. 3
2. Conditions of Approval

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Ziegler Chemical & Mineral Corporation (Ziegler) proposes to re-enter Shaft No. 3 of the Tom Taylor Mine in the Bonanza locality of southeast Uintah County, Utah, to mine out a remaining block of ore in the Little Emma gilsonite vein. Previous mining in Shaft No. 3 was completed in 1968. Mining would occur on U.S. Gilsonite Lease U-0122694, and no new surface disturbance is anticipated.

The mine is located in the Book Cliffs Resource Area of the Vernal District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) (Figure 1.1). This environmental assessment (EA) assesses the impacts of mining proposed on the existing site in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 3, T10S, R24E. The mining would begin in early 1997 and continue for 5-7 years or until the gilsonite deposit is exhausted or there is no further demand for the gilsonite.

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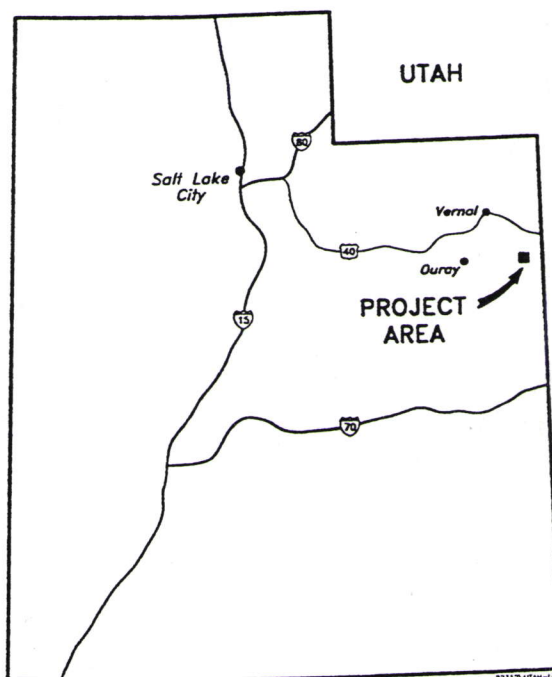


Figure 1.1 General Location Map.

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The Little Emma vein is one of the many veins that occur in the northeastern portion of the Uinta Basin (Figure 1.2). Gilsonite--a solid, brittle hydrocarbon--was formed when liquid hydrocarbons from the kerogen-rich beds of the upper part of the Green River Formation flowed into near vertical fractures in the Uinta Formation and subsequently solidified to form veins (Verbeek and Grout 1992; Monson and Parnell 1992). Gilsonite has been mined extensively in the Bonanza area since the latter part of the nineteenth century. It is shipped worldwide and is used in, among other things, the production of inks, sealing mastics, explosives, paints and varnishes, and control rods in some types of nuclear reactors.

The development of federal gilsonite leases and associated facilities is an integral part of the BLM's leasing program under authority of the *Mineral Leasing Act of 1920* as amended, the *Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands*, and the *Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976*. The EA area is within the Book Cliffs Resource Area, and policies for development and land use decisions within this area are contained in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Book Cliffs Resource Management Plan* (BCRMP) (BLM 1984). The Proposed Action would conform with the BCRMP because gilsonite resources would be developed on lands deemed suitable for that use under a development scenario that gives adequate protection to the environment.

This EA was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and in compliance with all applicable regulations and laws passed subsequently, including Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR], Parts 1500-1508), U.S. Department of Interior (USDI) requirements (*Department Manual 516, Environmental Quality*), and guidelines listed in *BLM NEPA Handbook, H-1790-1* (BLM 1988).